

How the Farmers Land Is Quietly Slipping Away

Well, "Citizen" Watson shook hands with the strenuous one. Ah, me!

Mrs. Otto Kempendorf and little boy left Wednesday morning to visit the Fair.

THE THEORY

The farmers are a prosperous and ever-growing class.—Always Wrong Bulletin (rep.) Prosser, Wash.

(And remember, please, the Bulletin boasts that the republicans do not indulge in "theories.")

THE FACT

The farmer knows he has been a favored child of fortune these last few years. He knows it because politicians have told him so. His pocketbook and bank account may not tell him so, but if the money is not in one or the other of these places, it is surely his own fault.

For do not the census reports for 1900 tell him that the 5,737,372 farms in the United States increased in value from 1880 to 1900 from \$10,197,096,776 to \$16,614,647,491, or 64 per cent? And did not the value of his live stock products increase during the same time from \$1,576,884,707 to \$3,075,447,703, or 95 per cent? Of course they did, because the census bureau says so, and the census bureau not only knows the facts, but tells them—perhaps too freely at times.

Therefore, it might reasonably be expected that the census reports would show that the farmer owns the land he tills, or is paying for it very rapidly. But in that respect the census reports are again disappointing. They do not show any thing of the kind. On the contrary, they show that the American farmer is slowly sinking from hopeless debt to absolute non-ownership of the land, as surely as the quicksand's victim is engulfed in the mire into which he goes more deeply with every struggle to get loose.

The American farmer shares with the American wageworker the distinction of belonging to the most pitifully deceived class of human being on the face of the earth. The farmers of most other nations are not taught to expect anything but a bare living, and are therefore seldom disappointed. But not so with the American farmer. The political orators tell him—during campaigns—that he is a most prosperous as well as a most independent person, and the capitalist newspapers that supply him with "information" repeat the tale the rest of the year. The simple fact seems to be that the farmer is a participant in a game in which every other member, except himself and the wage worker, may fleece some one else to reimburse himself for the loss of that which another has taken from him. If the manufacturer charges the wholesaler too much for his product, the wholesaler can take it out of the retailer, the retailer can pass it on to the consumer, and the consumer, if he be other than a wage worker or farmer, can look around for someone to "do," with a fair prospect of making a successful search.

But not so with the farmer. If he has been charged an excessive price for his food clothing or farm machinery, he cannot reimburse himself by demanding more for his grain, his wool, or his livestock, for the simple reason that he must sell, if he sell at all, for whatever he can get. Like the wageworker, the farmer cannot fix the price of a thing he sells, or a thing he buys—all this is done for him by eager gentlemen, who, perhaps, may fear that these tasks, in addition to their others, might break down the health of those who till the soil and manufacture its products.

In 1880 the American farmer owned 74.5 per cent of the land he tilled. In 1890 he owned but 71.6 per cent, while in the following ten

years, Mr. Rockefeller, Mr. Morgan and the rest of the "captains of industry" got in their work upon him to such an extent that the census of 1900 found him with only 64.7 per of his land his own.

In other words, while the value of the farmer's land and his live stock increased 150 per cent in the 30 years ending in 1900, 9.9 per cent of the land that he absolutely owned in 1890, was owned by the landlord class in 1900. These figures certainly indicate "great prosperity" for some one. Is it for the farmer? Well, generally speaking, a farmer who owned 160 acres in 1880 has lost the ownership of 16 acres since then.

From which it appears that the same inexorable laws are in operation in this country that have given Ireland to the landlords, placed the ownership of half of Prussia in the hands of 31,000 men and given practically all the land in Austria to the "nobility." The American farmer need only sit tight, "stand pat" and vote either of the tickets that his capitalist friends vote and his land will slip through his hands as noiselessly and as surely as the brigand's booty follows him into the brush after the train has been robbed.

For farm tenantry is increasing with all the irresistible steadiness of the tides, though it is all flood and no ebb, with this treasury tide. In the whole country, as has been shown, the percentages of farms operated by tenants increased from 25.5 in 1880 to 35.3 per cent in 1900.—ALLAN L. BENSON, editor of Detroit (Mich.) Times.

Report of National Quorum Meeting

The National Quorum of the Socialist party was called to order by National Secretary Maily at 11 a. m., June 11, 1904, in the office of the National Headquarters, Chicago. Victor L. Berger of Wisconsin, B. Berlyn of Illinois, John M. Work of Iowa and S. M. Reynolds of Indiana being present, Chas. G. Towner of Kentucky absent.

On motion of Comrade Berger, Comrade Berlyn was elected chairman. W. L. Oswald of the National office was elected secretary.

Letter from Comrade Towner explaining his absence was read by Secretary Maily, and same was ordered on file.

Secretary Maily further reported as follows: Referendums on Platform and Trades Union resolutions are now before the membership. Seriatim vote on constitution will go out today and close July 25th. Some demands have been received for the submission of the State and Municipal program to a referendum but in accordance with the action of the national convention the program was first to be revised by the national committee and then submitted to a referendum. Comrade Oswald of New Jersey has been engaged as bookkeeper in the National office, Comrade Martin having taken charge of literature department and newspaper plate matter. Comrade Clark is on a vacation, Comrade Oneal being temporarily in charge of his work. Contribution blanks for the half day's wage donation to the campaign fund have been sent out, and by this time the comrades should be energetically circulating them and the outlook is for a generous response.

Comrade Maily then gave a systematic review of the situation in the various states and territories, taking them up one by one. In the course of the statement the following actions were taken:

Secretary Maily advised sending H. M. McKee through Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina, in order that we might have an electoral ticket in each state. The

suggestion was endorsed by the Quorum.

Suggested by Comrade Berlyn that the Quorum issue a concise statement of our position on the Colorado situation.

On motion it was ordered and Comrade Berger was instructed to draft same.

On suggestion of Secretary Maily Comrade Berger moved that National Secretary be instructed to telegraph all state secretaries that the Quorum recommends them to notify all locals in their respective states to arrange for public protest meetings against capitalist anarchy in Colorado and that at such meetings collections be made to assist the Western Federation of Miners in Colorado. Adopted.

Adjournment for recess.

Quorum reconvened at 2 o'clock.

Continuing his review by states, National Secretary Maily submitted correspondence from W. Harry Spears of Chicago, claiming recognition as temporary state secretary of the Socialist party of Illinois, as the result of action reported to have been taken by the state executive committee. Also letter from Jas. S. Smith, state secretary, notifying National Secretary not to recognize W. Harry Spears, as the latter is a suspended member of Local Cook County.

Comrade Spears, having asked an opportunity to present his case, Comrade Berger moved that each of the two claimants to the state secretaryship be given one-half hour in which to present their arguments to the Quorum, and that they be notified to appear at four o'clock. Carried.

Correspondence from state secretary of Indiana presenting the necessity for an organizer in that state was read, and Secretary Maily recommended sending an organizer as requested.

On motion of Comrade Work it was decided to send Comrade Towner into Indiana for a period of from six weeks to two months.

Letter was submitted from State Secretary of Vermont asking that an organizer be sent into that state. Moved by Comrade Reynolds to send Comrade Hanford to Vermont for a short period previous to the state election in September. Carried.

The National Secretary was instructed to procure information as to the cost of maintaining the present state organizer in Florida with the intention of lending assistance to that state.

On motion of Comrade Reynolds the action of the National Secretary in approving Local Laurium, Mich., in the matter of expelling John B. Rastella for having accepted a nomination from a capitalist party, and on demand refusing to withdraw his name from the ticket, was approved.

The National Secretary reported that Mrs. Ella Reeve Cohen was performing organizing work in Delaware for the national headquarters, receiving sufficient financial aid to cover her traveling expenses and those of speakers engaged. Approved.

The National Secretary recommended that a referendum be initiated in the Indian Territory on the question of territorial organization. On motion of Reynolds he was empowered to take such a step.

The action of the National Secretary in calling a convention of the Socialist party of Maryland to nominate electoral ticket was endorsed.

The National Secretary reported having called a state convention in Rhode Island for June 12th, upon request of locals, and presented correspondence from locals relative to conditions in that state.

Berlyn moved that in view of the special circumstances existing in Rhode Island, the locals of that state be authorized to form a state

organization if they deemed it necessary, and that they be telegraphed to that effect.

The National Secretary reported having agreed with Comrade Chas. E. Randall after the national convention not to recommend that a national organizer be sent into Utah within at least 60 days, upon promise of Comrade Randall that he would upon his return to Utah, recommend unattached locals in that state to apply for charters direct from the national headquarters. The Secretary also reported that in response to request in letter from Comrade Randall's blank applications for charters had been sent to unattached locals in Utah. Secretary Maily's action was endorsed.

National secretary reported having issued calls for the Wyoming state convention to be held at Laramie June 19th, in accordance with referendum. A call had been issued by F. W. Ott signing himself "State Secretary." Comrade Ott explained that this call had to be published to comply with the law of Wyoming.

Moved by Comrade Reynolds that the National Secretary be empowered to take necessary steps toward securing an electoral ticket in every state. Carried.

The subject of general organizing work was taken up.

The National Secretary reported Organizer M. W. Wilkins to be in West Virginia, G. H. Goebel in Arizona, Robert Salties in Rhode Island, and that Geo. E. Bigelow would begin a tour of South and North Dakota in July.

Proposition was submitted Wm. A. Toole, Baltimore, Md., offering his services as organizer during his two weeks' vacation in July at the same terms as last year. Comrade Work moved to accept the offer. Carried.

Correspondence between national secretary and National Organizer Goebel on matters in April financial report was submitted and the Quorum voted to allow the charges of Comrade Goebel up to May first, but to establish hereafter the principle of not paying for baths, laundry and similar items.

Four o'clock having arrived, it was on motion decided to admit the Illinois contestants, Comrade Berlyn resigned the chair in order to avoid the charge of exercising a biased judgement, he being a resident of Illinois. Comrade Reynolds was elected in his place.

Comrade Spears not having appeared, Comrade Jas. S. Smith began to speak at 4:08. A few minutes later Comrades W. Harry Spears, J. H. Bard and Chas. Erickson of the opposition were admitted. It was then decided by unanimous consent that Comrade Spears should begin speaking at once, and Comrade Smith should follow him. Comrade Spears spoke for 35 minutes. Comrade Smith then made a brief statement, after which cross questions began and continued till 6 o'clock. Owing to the length and involved nature of the debate, the secretary did not attempt to record same.

At the close of the debate the meeting adjourned for recess.

The Quorum reconvened at 8 o'clock. A communication from Comrade M. V. Konda, offering to act as Slavonic speaker in the East, providing his railroad fare is paid, was read, and the National Secretary was instructed to procure full particulars.

Communications from and to Comrade Spargo, relative to a western tour, were read and the National Secretary was empowered to arrange a tour for Comrade Spargo, not to extend beyond election day, the national office to assume responsibility of employing him after election day. Carried.

National Secretary reported that

he was preparing a report for the International Socialist and Trades Union Congress in accordance with request of the secretary of the International Socialist Bureau, and had requested and received the assurance of the cooperation of Comrades M. Hillquit, Alex. Jonas and Ernest Untermyann. The Secretary also recommended that same be gotten up in printed form in English, German and French, for distribution among the delegates to the Congress. The report would accede to the request of the International Bureau as much as possible and give an outline of the growth and development of the Socialist and Trade Union movements in America since 1900.

The resignation of Comrade Ernest Untermyann as delegate to the International Socialist and Trades Union Congress was read, and upon motion, accepted.

The National Secretary was instructed to notify Comrade M. Hillquit, the alternate delegate, of Comrade Untermyann's resignation.

Applications for credentials to the Congress were received from Comrades Nicholas Klein and Mrs. Corinne S. Brown, and both were granted. The Quorum then took up consideration of national campaign matters. Comrade Berger suggested that various committees be appointed to conduct the campaign. After discussion, in which Comrades Work, Reynolds and Berlyn expressed themselves against the suggestion, the matter was dropped.

National Secretary reported that Debs would rest as much as possible from lecturing during June, July and August, filling only dates that were either arranged for or promised before he was nominated for President. That Comrade Debs would be prepared to open his campaign in September, and work unremittedly until election day. Also that Debs had placed his entire arrangements in the hands of the national office and would carry out whatever plans were made for him to the best of his ability.

Hanford had notified the National Secretary that he would be ready for active work in the field July 15, and placed his arrangements under the entire direction of the national office and would do everything possible to make the campaign successful.

An outline of the campaign tours of Comrades Debs and Hanford, as he had planned them, was then presented by the National Secretary Maily. Briefly they were to route Debs from Chicago southward through the southern states, then, the southwestern section, to the Pacific ocean, up the coast to Washington, then through the northwestern and central states back to Chicago. From this point he would work east, returning in time to close the campaign in Terre Haute on Nov. 6th. In the meantime Hanford would fill dates in Maine and Vermont before the state elections, afterwards going into the southwest. He would then work in the eastern and central states and close before election in the Pacific states.

After considerable discussion the general plan was approved with the modification that Comrade Debs should not go into any state south of Kentucky and Missouri. Consent was given Maily to go on record as believing that Comrade Debs should go into certain cities of the south, which the modification of the Quorum would exclude.

The National Secretary's plan of charging a definite sum to locals for the services of Debs and Hanford and furnishing advertising matter with the speakers was endorsed.

Moved by Comrade Berger that each candidate receive \$500 toward their expenses during the campaign, and more if necessary; carried.

The Illinois case was then taken

up and it was moved by Work: That having listened to the presentation of both sides and given the matter due consideration, the Quorum decide to recognize James S. Smith as state secretary of Illinois. The motion being put to a vote resulted as follows: Yes—Work, Reynolds and Berger; Berlyn not voting; none against.

Berger wished his opinion in the case to go on record as follows:

"I vote as I do because the national committee deals with state committees only and not with any minority faction of same. Furthermore, we have never been notified that the majority of the state committee of Illinois has removed Smith or has assented to his removal."

The National Secretary submitted a list of pamphlets in English and other languages which he proposed should be issued during the campaign and his plans in the matter were approved. A sketch for a colored lithograph containing portraits of Debs and Hanford was also approved.

Secretary Maily reported in regard to the Literature Bureau, that the same was being got into shape pending result of referendum on constitution; the report of convention proceedings would be ready in a few days, orders are coming in and there is probability of a good sale.

The National Secretary also reported that account books for local and state officials were mentioned to local secretaries in circular and orders are coming in. As soon as the number of orders warrant, books will be printed. Circular letter to locals upon plate matter had been sent out. Responses beginning to come in. Also that he had written to papers that had already promised to take plate matter and majority had agreed to take from the national office. That 100 papers were needed before the American Press Association would handle same, and he hoped soon to have sufficient to begin sending out plates. Articles by Debs, Simons, Martin, Oneal and others are ready for the first issue.

The National Secretary submitted forms for proposed resignation blanks for Socialist candidates for use by state, county and city committee, and suggested that same be issued by the national office for the convenience of the various organizations. These forms were prepared in response to numerous demands. Approved.

Quorum adjourned at 12:45 to meet again July 9th at 8 p. m.

W. L. OSWALD, Secretary.

Don't Like the Nominations.

The editor of the Argus, in a late issue, donated about two hours of his valuable time, expostulating the merits of Messrs. Walsh and Lynch, candidates for Congress, and state secretary respectively, recently nominated at the state convention of the Socialist party. The writer of the article is bewildered as to how these names, could possibly be considered by even a Socialist convention. The humorist, in order that he point out his periodic flashes of witicism, and protect against the lethargy of his readers in "catching on" to funny remarks, breaks his sayings in appropriate chunks, by indiscriminately slaughtering the interrogation point. He thinks the act of the convention has a striking resemblance to P. T. Barnum making a collection of curious animals. He also thinks it was the bauble act of a bauble party, while in the state of "baubility."

Who knows? Perhaps the Montana Socialists nominated Messrs. Walsh and Lynch that the price of alfalfa in Oregon may enhance, or to stabilize Western union stock, or then again they may have had in view, the giving of employment, at cheap wages, to cheap hairbrained jackscraws who pose as country editors on country papers, with country circulations, and whose intellectual ability begins and ends at writing up tea parties, divorce cases and political roorbacks. At any rate, better than the common folk and the Irish pass it up for further consideration to the Almighty, or down to "Citizen" Watson.